

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN; ECLA; CI

SUBJECT: ECLA: COMMENTS ON ANNUAL REPORT

REF: SANTIAGO 2724

1. YOU SHOULD USE FOLLOWING COMMENTS IN REPLYING TO IGLESIAS LETTER (REFTEL) WITH APPROPRIATE CHANGES DEPENDING ON FORM YOU SELECT. REPLY COULD BE EITHER LETTER SIGNED BY AMBASSADOR OR NOTE.

(A) AS AN EXAMPLE OF A ROUTINE REPORT TO ECOSOC ON THE ECLA SECRETARIAT'S WORK PROJECTS DURING THE PERIOD MARCH 31, 1973, TO FEBRUARY 28, 1974, WE HAVE VERY FEW SPECIFIC OBJECTIONS TO DOCUMENT E/CN.12/972. IN FACT, IT DEMONSTRATES THE WIDE RANGE OF THE SECRETARIAT'S WORK AND THE USEFULNESS OF SOME OF IT. WE DO, HOWEVER, HAVE A GENERAL PROBLEM IN THAT WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE REPORT PRESENTS A TRUE PICTURE OF THE NEW AND ENCOURAGING CHANGES WHICH WERE JUST BEGINNING IN ECLA DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD COVERED. WE ARE SUBMITTING THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS, UNCLASSIFIED

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THEREFORE, NOT IN AN EFFORT TO BE NEGATIVE, BUT RATHER TO

PRESENT SOME OF OUR THOUGHTS WHICH YOU MAY FIND USEFUL WHEN THE TIME COMES FOR LATER REPORTS. WE ARE ENCOURAGED THAT DEVELOPMENTS ARE UNDERWAY IN ECLA WHICH COULD CHANGE BOTH DEVELOPMENTS ARE UNDERWAY IN ECLA WHICH COULD CHANGE BOTH ITS WORK AND ITS IMAGE OF THE PAST DECADE. IT BEHOOVES

ECLA AND ITS MEMBERS TO SEE THAT ECOSOC AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ARE AWARE OF THESE DEVELOPING CHANGES, ABOUT WHICH WE HAVE COMMENTED FAVORABLY BEFORE.

(B) FROM OUR VIEWPOINT, THE DISAPPOINTING ELEMENTS IN THIS ANNUAL REPORT STEM BASICALLY FROM TWO FACTS: (1) THERE IS NO REFERENCE TO THE PENDING IMPORTANT CHANGES IN ECLA'S WORK PROGRAM AND GOALS, THE PLANNING FOR WHICH BEGAN DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD AND (2) THE REPORT IS ALMOST ENTIRELY A SUMMARIZED LISTING OF SPECIFIC WORK PROJECTS WITH NO HINT OF ANY GENERAL PRIORITIES OR PLAN BEHIND THOSE PROJECTS. ON THE FIRST POINT, WE HAVE ALREADY EXPRESSED OUR INFORMAL VIEWS ABOUT THE REVISED WORK PROGRAM AND SO WILL ONLY ADD HERE THAT INFORMING ECOSOC THAT THOSE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES WERE BEING PLANNED DURING THIS PERIOD WOULD HAVE ENHANCED ECLA'S REPUTATION AS AN INNOVATIVE ORGANIZATION. WE REGRET THAT THIS OPPORTUNITY HAS BEEN MISSED, ALTHOUGH WE FULLY UNDERSTAND THAT THE REVISED GOALS AND WORK PROGRAM DID NOT ACTUALLY TAKE EFFECT DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD.

(C) AS FOR THE FACT THAT THE REPORT IS CHIEFLY A SUMMARIZED LISTING OF STUDIES, WE ARE HAPPY TO NOTE THAT MANY OF THE RELEVANT STUDIES THAT WE HAVE SEEN (AND WE HAVE NOT SEEN THEM ALL) HAVE BEEN OF HIGH QUALITY. THERE IS, THEREFORE, GOOD REASON TO BE PROUD OF THOSE AND TO EMPHASIZE THEM IN PORTIONS OF THE ANNUAL REPORT. THE SUMMARIES ARE, HOWEVER, CHIEFLY A ROUTINE LISTING OF THE DAY-TO-DAY WORK OF EACH SECRETARIAT DIVISION. THAT IN SOME BRIEF FORM MUST BE REPORTED TO ECOSOC, BUT THERE IS A REGRETTABLE LACK OF EFFORT TO EXPLAIN THE ORGANIZATION'S OVERALL AIMS AND PRIORITIES, WHETHER BY DIVISION, THE TOTAL SECRETARIAT OR BOTH. THIS LEAVES THE DESCRIPTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS DANGLING AS THOUGH THEY WERE TIED TO UNCLASSIFIED

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NO CENTRAL PURPOSE. WE AND OTHERS KNOW THIS IS NOT THE CASE, CERTAINLY AS A RESULT OF RECENT CHANGES, BUT THE REPORT SHOULD STATE WHAT THOSE PURPOSES ARE.

(D) WE WERE ALSO SURPRISED AT THE VERY FEW REFERENCES IN THE REPORT TO MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION ITSELF, THE ULTIMATE SOURCE OF DECISION-MAKING FOR THE WORK DESCRIBED IN THIS ANNUAL REPORT. IT IS TRUE THERE WAS NO

ECLA PLENARY SESSION DURING THE PERIOD COVERED BY THIS REPORT, BUT THE 15TH PLENARY SESSION ENDED THE DAY BEFORE THE BEGINNING DATE OF THIS REPORT. DECISIONS WERE MADE AT THAT SESSION ON WHICH WERE BASED THE PROJECTS DESCRIBED HERE AS WELL AS THE INITIATION OF CHANGES IN GOALS, PRIORITIES, AND WORK PROGRAMS. THUS THE REPORT SHOULD HAVE INCLUDED

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES LINKING THE SECRETARIAT'S WORK TO THE DESIRES OF THE COMMISSION'S MEMBERS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THERE WAS DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD A MEETING OF THE ECLA COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE. EVEN THOUGH IMPORTANT DECISIONS WERE MADE THERE, PARTICULARLY THE ONE DRAWING ECLA AND ILPES MORE CLOSELY TOGETHER, THERE IS NO REFERENCE IN THIS REPORT TO THAT SIGNIFICANT EVENT.

(E) WE WOULD LIKE TO NOTE ON SPECIFIC PROGRAMS THAT WE FOUND ENCOURAGING, THE SECRETARIAT'S EMPHASIS ON REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL INTEGRATION. WE UNDERSTAND THE REASONS BEHIND THE RELATIVELY BRIEF LISTING OF WORK ON POPULATION MATTERS, BUT HOPE THAT ECLA WILL MOVE AHEAD ENERGETICALLY TO PREPARE ITS PLANS FOR MUCH CLOSER INTEGRATION WITH CELADE, ONE OF THE OUTSTANDING DEMOGRAPHIC ORGANIZATIONS IN THIS AREA OF THE WORLD. ON THAT BASIS, WE HOPE ECLA'S POPULATION ACTIVITIES WILL INCREASE.

(F) WE WOULD FIND IT USEFUL TO BE KEPT INFORMED ABOUT THE RELATIVELY FEW MEETINGS WHICH ECLA SPONSORS, RATHER THAN LEARNING ABOUT SOME OF THEM FROM A REPORT AFTER-THE-FACT. FOR EXAMPLE, THE MEETING IN BERLIN MENTIONED IN PARAGRAPH 137 SOUNDED SIGNIFICANT ENOUGH TO WARRANT DISTRIBUTION OF ITS RESULTS TO ECLA'S MEMBERS. IN FACT, WE WOULD APPRECIATE A MUCH MORE REGULAR FLOW OF DOCUMENTS RELATED TO ECLA'S WORK. WE BENEFIT FROM THOSE THAT WE DO

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RECEIVE, BUT HAVE LEARNED ABOUT OTHERS ONLY FROM THE SUMMARIES IN THIS ANNUAL REPORT.

(G) WE HOPE THESE COMMENTS WILL BE TAKEN IN THE HELPFUL SPIRIT IN WHICH THEY ARE INTENDED AND WILL BE OF ASSISTANCE IN PRESENTING NEXT YEAR A REPORT THAT WILL DEMONSTRATE TO ECOSOC THE INDUBITABLE FACT THAT ECLA IS AGAIN BECOMING A SIGNIFICANT HEMISPHERIC BODY. KISSINGER

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